TIPS FOR HEALTHY RESTAURANT DINING

Before you go:  Choose your restaurant wisely.

- Avoid those that emphasize fried foods.
- Go to restaurants with low-fat and/or vegetarian options.
- Don’t choose all-you-can-eat places.

When you arrive:  Avoid high calorie appetizers and drinks.

- To reduce temptation, eat a light snack before you go (a piece of fruit or a small carton of fat-free yogurt).  Never arrive to a restaurant starving!
- Ask for a tall glass of water instead of a cocktail, soda, milkshake, or fruit smoothie.  Sip on it slowly until your meal arrives.

Before you order:  Look for items which are prepared with less fat.

Choose these:

- steamed
- broiled (dry, in lemon juice, or in wine)
- charbroiled
- barbecued
- mesquite grilled
- poached
- roasted
- stir fried
- round or loin cuts of meat
- in its own juice
- tomato sauce
- marinara or marsala sauce

Limit/Avoid these:

- fried/crispy
- pan fried/hash
- sautéed
- breaded
- escalloped
- creamy/creamed
- buttery/buttered
- au gratin
- pot pie
- prime cuts of meat
- in its own gravy
- hollandaise or alfredo sauce
- cheese or meat sauce

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**Before you order:** **Visualize what a healthy plate looks like.**

1/2 of your plate should be filled with low-fat, high-fiber vegetables and fruits.

1/4 of your plate should be filled with low-fat protein rich foods (e.g. skinless chicken breast, fish, or beans).

1/4 of your plate should be filled with whole grains.

**When you order:** **Ask questions, and make low-fat requests.**

- **Veggies and Fruits**
  - Ask whether or not the food is prepared in oil or with butter/margarine.
  - Ask if they have vinegar, lemon juice, or other low-fat salad dressings.
  - Request sauces, gravies, and salad dressings on the side; or leave them off.
  - Request that butter, margarine, and sauces be left off the vegetables.

- **Protein**
  - Order sandwiches and burgers without mayonnaise or special sauces. Ask for ketchup and/or mustard instead.
  - Ask for less cheese. Pile on the fresh vegetables instead.
  - Ask for low-fat foods to replace high-fat foods. For instance, ask for a baked potato instead of french fries.
  - Ask for a steamed vegetable, green salad, or fresh fruit instead of creamy coleslaw or macaroni salad.
  - Request broiled, poached, or steamed rather than fried.

- **Whole Grains**
  - Be assertive! Most waiters/waitresses are trained to honor your preferences.
Before and during the meal: Be mindful of how much food you eat.

- Order small servings, especially of higher-fat foods.
- Create a light meal by ordering an appetizer, soup and salad, or a couple of side dishes instead of a huge entrée.
- Share your meal with a friend.
- Ask for a take-home box or bag, and put away half of your meal before you begin eating. You'll be less tempted to over-eat.
- Drink several glasses of water to fill up.
- For a sweet dessert, eat an after-dinner mint or chocolate kiss. Or, ask for a bowl of fresh fruit.
- Eat slowly. Enjoy the convenience, company, and other aspects of dining out besides the food. Besides, it takes 15-30 minutes to feel fullness, and you don't want to overeat.

During the meal: Make your own modifications.

- Trim all visible fat off meat.
- Take the skin off chicken.
- Don't add butter or margarine.
- Dip your fork into the salad dressing before each bite instead of pouring it all on at once. You'll get just enough dressing for flavor but less fat.